



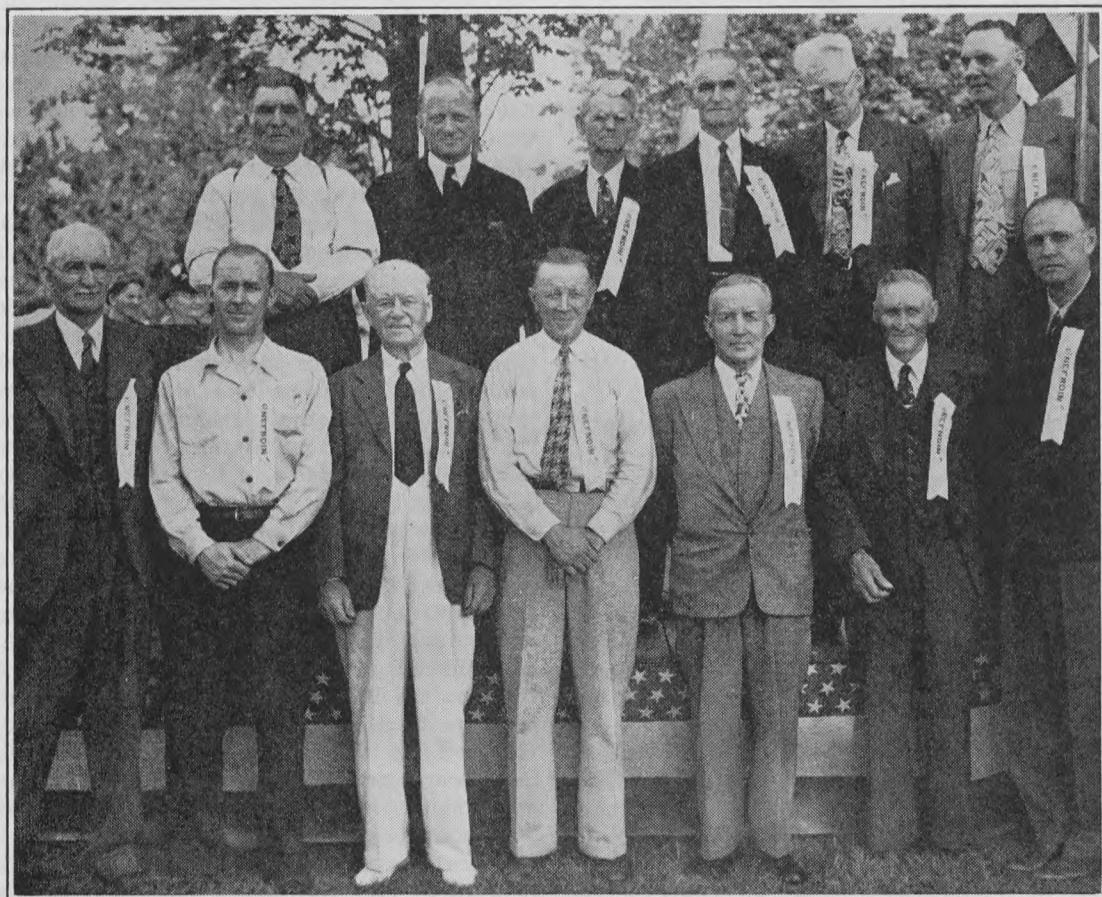
VOLUME 2

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, AUGUST, 1946

NUMBER 11

The Icelandic Day Committee

BLAINE - VANCOUVER



Back Row, left to right—J. E. Westford, V. J. Eylands (visitor), Andrew Danielson (chairman), A. E. Kristjanson, E. Eliason, S. Eymundson. Front Row—J. Straumford, L. Sigurdson, H. S. Helgason, B. Kolbeins, E. Haralds, B. Asmundson, H. Thorlakson.

(Story on Next Page)

Our Visit to the West Coast

Almost eight years to the day, after our departure from the Bellingham-Blaine-Pt. Roberts Parish, the scene of our labor during the seven previous years, my wife and I were back on that familiar field. I was invited by the committee in charge of the Icelandic Day Celebration, and was to be the speaker at the Peace Arch Program held on Sunday afternoon, the 28th of July. We had started out with a great deal of anticipation and rejoicing, and the experience was altogether delightful. The day of the celebration was as though made to order, and the landscape around the Peace Arch far surpassed the prettiest colored photograph imaginable. On one hand were the majestic snow-capped mountains, on the other the placid waters of Puget Sound. Much had been done in latter years to beautify the Samuel Hill Memorial Park, where the Peace Arch stands. It is now one of the most beautiful spots on the otherwise exquisitely beautiful Pacific coast. Many hundreds of people in holiday dress and mood swarmed in this beauty spot, and of these six or perhaps seven hundred were Icelanders, young and old. They had started to come early in the day, by train, bus, or in private automobiles. They had all come with one objective, or perhaps two: (1) to see their old friends from nearby and distant places, and (2) to help celebrate one more ISLENDINGADAG, which here, like in many other parts of the United States and Canada, where our people live, has become a tradition at this time of the year.

The program was to commence at 1.30 sharp. We arrived just in the nick of time. In the forenoon I had been busy conducting a service in my old St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Bellingham, which I served during my sojourn on the Pacific coast, together with Blaine and Point Roberts. Many of our old friends greeted us in the familiar old church there, which had been renovated, and showed many signs of material and spiritual progress under the able and energetic leadership of young Pastor Allport, of the Pacific Synod, who has now been there a little more than a year. This good pastor had wired me and asked me to preach at this service, and naturally I expected him to be there and act as liturgist. But on arriving at the home of my old friends Mr. and Mrs. Barney Asmundson, who for many years have been very active members of this church, I found that the parson had made use of the opportunity to visit his friends in a former parish in Oregon, and had taken chances on leaving the entire service to me. However, he had prepared a bulletin, as

is now the custom in many churches, and in which he had made a detailed outline of the service, and other details which he wished to call to the attention of his people. I conducted the service accordingly, and preached a sermon to an appreciative audience. At the close of the service several of our friends lingered at the door. They said this was just like old times, seemed that we had never been away at all. Of course we felt flattered. Could it be that eight years had not changed us in the least? My preaching had not improved a bit! That thought was not so flattering. Perhaps they did not mean it that way. But we must hurry, Blaine is more than twenty miles away, and I must not be late. How we used to hurry between those places during my ministry here; the wife huddling our four children into my old Chevrolet coach, often without taking sufficient time for lunch, and off we were for the 2 o'clock service in Blaine. It is all so reminiscent, and yet today it is different. Today we have no children with us, much as they and we would have liked to be here all together. But eight years have changed them a great deal. They are no longer the babies they used to be. Two of them are working, one in North Dakota, and one in Winnipeg, and two are staying at our summer cottage at Gimli, in the company of Mrs. Lauga Johannesson of Winnipeg. We do not forget them, neither do we worry about them. Now we are also driving our "own" automobile. Really, however, this one belongs to Dan Danielson, the president of the Blaine Lutheran Church, but he had shown us the extraordinary kindness of loaning it to us for the day, and besides that he took us around in it both before and after the festivities of this day. Arriving at the park, we found long lines of shining automobiles neatly parked, and the traffic efficiently supervised by our friend Dan, and a group of young men assisting him. People are still busy enjoying their dinner, served them on the lawn to one side of the program platform by the Blaine Lutheran Ladies Aid. The food is served from a nearby kitchen. The Park Boards provide many such kitchens in the parks along the Pacific coast. They are neat little houses, with tables, benches, gas or electric stoves, and running water, hot and cold. It is all so very convenient and yet it entails a great deal of work for the ladies to serve many hundreds of people, especially when many items of food are still rationed. But our ladies, now as always, work very quickly and efficiently.

Our Parish Messenger

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We sit down at one of the tables, and abundant food is provided. But there is not much time to enjoy it. There are so many friends to see, and considerable hand-shaking to be done. Only half through with my meal I notice a commotion on the platform. The choir is taking their places, the loud speaker is being tested. The chairman, Mr. Andrew Danielson, is calling all hands on deck. He has been presiding at such meetings more often than any other man during the past forty years, or as long as these celebrations in one form or another have been held in Blaine. He is no longer as physically robust as when I last knew him, but he is still firm and fluent of speech. After his introduction, in which he stated the purposes of the meeting, and discussed plans relative to future programs of this kind, a large and splendid choir under the leadership of Mr. Sigurdur Helgason of Blaine, who recently won recognition from the Government of Iceland for his musical compositions, rendered selections such as Gud Vors Lands. Solos are rendered by Elias Breidford, a talented local singer, Mrs. O. S. Laxdal, and Mrs. Ninna Stevens of Tacoma, a charming soprano, without whose presence and performance no program is complete in Blaine. Mr. Tryggvi Bjornson, a noted pianist from New York, whose parents now reside in Blaine, plays the accompaniment for the soloists. But it is not easy for me to sit still on the platform, and enjoy the musical program, which on the whole was of high caliber, nor the original poem by Armann Bjornson of Vancouver. There is a veritable sea of faces turned towards the platform, and in many instances they were those of old dear friends, whom we never had a chance to see after that, or even to greet, except by a mere wave of the hand. There were the Solomons, the Johannsons, the Goodmans, the Eiriksons, all from Point Roberts, and many others. Why are we in such a hurry that we can not even shake hands with these good people who had been so kind to us. But this is no time to grow sentimental. I am here for a purpose. I am to give the main speech of the afternoon, and what an expensive speech it is!

I often wondered, in the course of its preparation, and now when I am about to deliver it, whether it was worth taking across half of this vast continent; and I suppose after its delivery many in my audience wondered the same, if they ever gave it a thought. But here it goes. It is a toast to Iceland, past, present and future. It is well received, but it is nevertheless quite apparent that a large number of young people present do not understand it. Perhaps we have come to a time in our social life as western Icelanders, when we have to recognize the obvious fact that our children and children's children in great many instances, no longer appreciate the language of the old land, and that future odes to Iceland should be made intelligible to the coming generation. We, older people, know all the facts which usually are embodied in these toasts, as a rule they are not strikingly original—how indeed could they be—but to our young people, upon whom all future activity depends, these speeches would contain a great deal of information, and let us hope, some inspiration. The program is now drawing to a close. Rev. Albert Kristjansson, now retired, but living in Blaine, delivers an original poem, a duet is sung by Elias Breidford and Walter Johnson, the choir renders additional selections, greetings are brought by Eric Sigmar, a promising and very popular theological student now serving in Blaine, and by Halfdan Thorlaksson, Icelandic consul in Vancouver. The chairman closes the meeting, and the people disperse quickly, while a few linger for a few moments of fellowship. The day is over, and yet the sun is still high on the cloudless western sky. In the estimation of those in charge the day had been successful. To us, who came from the great distance, it was an unforgettable day, and will long be cherished in our grateful memories.

The next few days were crowded with activity. The return ticket and urgent matters awaiting us at home demand our return much too soon. But since there are not enough days to go around, the nights or parts of them, are used for travel, dinners, conferences and house calls. Apart from "the great day" itself, certain events will be outstanding in our memory. Among these are the reception tendered us in the Blaine Parish Hall, by the congregation there, the Icelandic Day Committee, and the Icelandic League chapter "Aldan" at which time the Young People's Society of the Church presented me with a valuable gift; the trip to Seattle with Thorður Asmundson, a young Bellingham attorney, his family and parents, to the home of Mrs. Laura Sigurdson, an old

(Continued on Page 8)



It will be noted by these camp photos that the girls were more fortunate in getting into the pictures than the boys. There was a considerable, though smaller, enrollment of boys.

Dedication Service at Sunrise Lutheran Camp

By S. O. BJERRING

The sun rode high at Sunrise Lutheran Camp at Lake Winnipeg, Sunday the 7th of July, on the occasion of the dedication of the camp to its benevolent service. Not only did nature smilingly approve of the day but the women of the Lutheran League, whose enterprise solely and achievement this camp represents, added warmth and lustre with their happy countenances to the gathering of some 600 persons that had come far and wide to be part of this memorable service.

And well might our women be happy, for there were the fruits of their labors now being shared by a most favorably impressed public, of which it is safe to assume a majority had held a skeptical view up to within a late date that this camp would be anything more than a "pipe dream" for a long time, they were now convinced by the accomplished fact before them, for the women had done it again.

Here on the shores of Lake Winnipeg, where our pioneers have set foot and first acquired their rights to land and fertile soil in these great western spaces, another peaceful conquest had taken place, and in the will to serve present and coming generations of our people and particularly to administer to our youth, there had now been staked out and established this com-

munity, instituted for the purpose of serving ideals and meeting the needs of the inner man and spirit.

This seemed to be the theme of the address delivered by the main speaker, the Rev. R. Marteinsson and the burden of the chairman's remarks, the Rev. E. H. Fafnis of Mountain, North Dakota.

Following in that strain and paying tribute to the Women's Lutheran League, the dedication of the camp was performed by the president of the Icelandic Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Rev. H. Sigmar, D.D., of Vancouver, British Columbia.

Before the open air gathering dispersed to partake of the refreshments that the camp workers had so busily and generously prepared, the president of the Women's League, Mrs. Ingibjorg Olafsson, of Selkirk, Man., was called on to address the audience, which she did in that unassuming and gracious manner, which has placed her in the forefront of Christian leadership among our women.

After an hour of enjoyable social fellowship in the camp's dining room, which was crowded to capacity, the visitors again gathered in the shade of the outdoor auditorium to listen to messages from some very welcome guests who

had arrived by train at the little nearby station of Husavik just towards the close of the first part of the dedication program. They were the Rev. Arthur H. Getz of the U.L.C.A. Parish Church School Board, New York, who was accompanied from Winnipeg by Rev. F. W. Lenz. With them also came Miss Elinore Gilstrom of Saskatoon, Educational Missionary, under the auspices of the Parish School.

Rev. Getz brought greeting in his official capacity and spoke at some length, his address in both the lighter and more earnest vein, being received with impressive attention. It was felt, in the way he illustrated it to us, that here at this camp was a "trysting place" where the "sign posts" of the living Word might be observed and where we could be aided to take it with us as a "measuring rod" in our dealings with our fellow men.

Rev. Lenz of Winnipeg, brought us greetings from the sister Lutheran Camp at Lake Brereton and then introduced Miss Gilstrom to the gathering, when she in turn spoke briefly and announced how the services of her office were available to all U.L.C.A. affiliated parishes that desired assistance in religious educational work.

At the conclusion of these addresses, which were thanked for respectively by Dr. Sigmar of Vancouver, and his son, Rev. H. Sigmar of Seattle, the audience stood up to sing the doxology and the National Anthem.

Though this was the official ending to a bright and memorable day, and now late in the

afternoon, there seemed no haste to depart. It was more as if everyone wanted to stop awhile and consider the significance of what they had witnessed and enjoyed and to comment on these things among themselves. Here surely was a milestone marking the Christian endeavor of our people here. I say "our" for this is an enterprise we can all have a stake in and take real pride in.

Much as we might have been impressed by attainment to date as represented in its physical token of site and buildings which are the tangible evidence of effort and loyalty of both sung and unsung workers and supporters, it was sensed that if this work, so well begun, was to prosper in the years ahead, that reliance would have to be placed in that intangible element that ever challenges our best efforts that seeks development through growth. Would the faith, vision and conviction that founded this "trysting" place continue to captivate the minds and hearts of our coming generation.

It might have been such meditation that caused some to walk towards the lake shore to catch the glimpses of the lowering sun on its rippling surface and then unmindful of the departing hour of the chartered vehicle that was to take them back to the city, retracing their steps leisurely to find out on their return that the motor transportation had departed.

The writer had in mind the enrolled class of young people and youthful leaders for the week ahead, the builders of tomorrow.



At Sunrise Lutheran Camp

Photos by O. Bjornson Jr.

NEW ORGANIST AT FIRST LUTHERAN, WINNIPEG

On Sunday, August 18th, Mr. Harold J. Lupton, assumed his duties as organist and choir leader at the First Lutheran Church, succeeding Mrs. Eric A. Isfeld, who very capably had filled that post since last Christmas, when Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson relinquished her duties in this field to study music in New York City.

Mr. Lupton brings to this task a very rich and varied experience in the field of music. A native of England, he became at an early age boy chorister in the Anglican Church, later becoming Altar Server. He was trained in organ playing for the church service by Thos. Russell, Mus. Bac., F.R.C.O., at the historic church of St. Edmund, King and Martyr, Lombard St., City of London.



Harold J. Lupton

He was organist and choir master of Wickford Parish Church for about ten years. Coming to Canada, he has had twenty or more years' experience in various churches in Winnipeg, including Zion United, Trinity Baptist, St. James Anglican, and during the last four years at the First English Lutheran on Maryland St.

He entered the composition field in 1940 after five years of intensive study of this subject. He has to his credit twelve first prize winning compositions in contests in 1940-1942, most of which have been sung in various churches in Winnipeg. Some of his compositions have been published in the United States.

Regular English Services will be resumed in the First Lutheran Church, Sunday, Sept. 8th, at 11 a.m.

CHURCH NEWS FROM LANGRUTH

By MRS. G. THORLEIFSON

On Sunday afternoon, July 28th, 1946, Rev. H. S. Sigmar of Seattle, conducted a confirmation, Communion and Baptismal service in the Lutheran Church with a good attendance. Seven young people made their first serious vows and listened intently to a very impressive sermon from the pastor, their friendly instructor and companion of two weeks. The young people were: Olavia Arnason, Dorothy Magnusson, Margaret Thompson, Eileen Thompson, Clifford Johanson, Gordon McInnis and Harvey Tomasson. Between 40 and 50 partook of Holy Communion. The infants and children christened were: Norman John Arnason, William Harold Johnson, Thedrick Ralph Jonasson, James Bodvar Magnusson, Gloria Louise Huyber and Robert Larry Thompson.

In the evening a joint service with the United Church congregation was held in the Lutheran Church with Mr. M. Pippy, student pastor, and Rev. H. S. Sigmar, conducting the service. Both spoke fluently, the former addressing the young people and the latter dwelling on community co-operation and therefore the possibility in the future—if not near, then in years to come—to have one minister serving the different denominations in one or more languages.

Sunday School is carried on every Sunday morning during the year with the exception of July and August. During these vacation months, one Sunday afternoon is set aside for a Sunday School and Ladies Aid Picnic to which the community is invited. Each home brings a generous supply of lunch, which is pooled in a most friendly fashion, and coffee and lemonade supplied by the two organizations. Races for young and old with surprise packets as prizes keep up keen interest. The picnic is held near the lake so that those wishing to take a "dip" can make a real day of the outing.

All this is very fine, but the best of all is the friendly atmosphere. Here friends meet who maybe have not met since last year, and exchange their words of greeting.

During the fall months the congregation hopes to have two or three services with Rev. S. Sigurgeirson of Gimli supplying, when convenient in September.

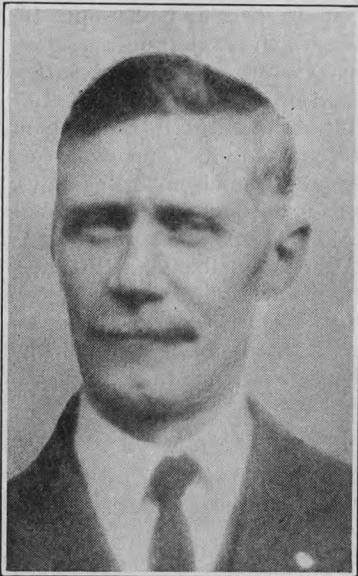
Quite a number of the Lutheran congregations attend the United Church services each Sunday evening, conducted by Mr. Murray Pippy, who incidentally, is very interested in Icelandic and has attended the Icelandic Evening School in Winnipeg.

Altar Presented and Dedicated

A capacity house greeted the editor of this paper in the Lundar Lutheran Church, Sunday afternoon, August 11 at 2 o'clock, as he came there to conduct a service. It was no ordinary service, but rather one at which a beautiful altar (see cut) was presented to the congregation in memory of one of the most respected pioneers of the community, now deceased, Gudmundur Kristjan Breckman. The altar was donated by his widow, Mrs. Jakobina Breckman of 542 Victor St., Winnipeg, and her children. Prior to this the Lundar Church, which Mr. Breckman helped to build, had been remodeled and renovated on the inside, and now presents a very attractive and truly a churchly appearance.

Mr. Gudmundur Breckman, in whose honor this altar was presented, was born in 1869 and died in 1934. He was for over 30 years a resident of the Lundar community, and in many ways its leading citizen during this long period. Aside from his lifelong interest and activity in the church, he was a member of the Lundar town council, the local school board, and manager, and later owner and manager of the Lundar creamery, which is still a flourishing institution. In 1896 he was married to Jakobina Isleifs. Eleven children were born to their union, of whom five daughters and four sons are still living.

The church choir, under the direction of Mr.



G. K. Breckman



Guttormson rendered appropriate selections at this service, and aided greatly in making the service festive and dignified.

Unknown to the Breckman family, when this service was arranged, the Federated Church at Lundar had also announced a service in their church at the same hour on the same day. But the pastor of that church, the Rev. H. E. Johnson, very courteously and out of respect for the memory of the man who was being honored, dispensed with his service, and brought his congregation over to the Lutheran Church. Thus, the whole community was united in paying tribute to a man whose abiding interest in life was to unite his countrymen and particularly the members of his community about the gospel of the living Christ.

His family could hardly have selected a more fitting memorial. The altar was built by a Winnipeg carpenter, Mr. J. H. Norman, 623 Agnes St.

Following the service refreshments were served in the Parish Hall by the Lutheran Ladies Aid of Lundar.



Considerable work has been done in renovating the First Lutheran Church, Winnipeg. A railing has been installed at the north entrance to assist the public, particularly old people, in walking in and out. Battleship linoleum has been placed in the aisles of the main auditorium, the floor in the choir room covered, the statue cleaned, and the sign on the front of the church done over.

JON VIDALIN

(Continued from Last Month)

Speaking of the problem of God's dealing with men through adversity, in one sermon he says: "Tell me yet again! When a physician gives us bitter medicine to make our body well, or when he wields a knife to clean a wound in order that it may heal, do we get angry and protest his actions? No man in his right senses will do this if he loves his health; on the contrary we thank him and pay him even though he may fail in his efforts, which often happens. Oh, Child of God, should you then get angry at the good physician, whose soft hand of healing penetrates thy wounds which have lost all sense of feeling, until he makes them sensitive by the bitter cross; should you not much rather receive such treatment joyfully, and be grateful therefor? Who knows but that the swelling of pride, the palsy of covetousness, the chill of extravagance, the consumption of envy, the frenzy of anger and vengefulness may afflict your soul so that it has lost all sensitiveness. There is hardly anyone amongst us who has not suffered from some of these, but the cross is the only remedy for all these ailments. The sickness of the body may be cured with different kinds of medicine, according to circumstances, but the afflictions of the soul can be cured only by the cross of Jesus our Lord.

These examples will have to suffice to point out the reasons for the extraordinary popularity of this unique book. Vidalin is by far the most eloquent preacher Iceland has produced, and his sermons would without doubt receive a place of honor in the homeletic literature of the world, if they were known outside of Iceland. He is a true son of the Reformation both in faith and doctrine, he is the keenest psychologist among Icelandic clergymen to this day. Whether the nation agreed with his theology or not, there was always a great deal that could be learned from him. The nation admires him for his wisdom and learning, for his rethorical fervor, for the boldness and brilliancy of his illustrations, for his florid and exuberant diction, for his courageous treatment of current abuses, and for the vividness of his imagination. He was the storm that blew all hay and thistle into utter darkness, and left the souls of men clean, and desirous of remaining clean. He has stood before his nation for centuries, in their homes in the valleys, upon the mountains, and down by the sea. He has talked to them in a language that they understood, and held them to the highest standards which they in their innermost soul desired to attain. They have

been angry at him at times for his plain speaking, but they have always come back for more. Mad or modest, believers or unbelievers, the Icelanders still love and respect Meistara Jon, their greatest master of the spoken word.

A new church has been erected and dedicated at Piney, Manitoba. We hope to have the story of this enterprise, and an account of the dedication in the next issue of this paper.

OUR VISIT TO THE WEST COAST

(Continued from Page 3)

friend from Upham, N.D., who had an open house for a host of people in our honor; the trip to Inspiration Point on the famous Chuchanut Drive with Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Westford; the dinner with the Eklund sisters of Bellingham, at the exclusive Fisherman's Cove on Gooseberry Point, where we sat in a veritable glass house, watching the sunset on the ocean, and observed the playful pranks of a porpoise (a small whale) a few rods from the shore, and the open house party at their home later the same evening; the trip to Birch Bay with Mrs. Emily Olson of Bellingham; the conference with the church leaders in Blaine; the services in Blaine and Vancouver the first Sunday in August; the six-hour boat trip to Victoria, and the twenty-minute flight the same distance back to Vancouver.

My wife and I desire to express our gratitude to our many friends who made our trip so very eventful, interesting and pleasant. In mentioning names we must confine ourselves to those only who gave us lodging and with whom we broke bread most frequently, but they are: Mr. and Mrs. B. Asmundson in Bellingham; Mr. and Mrs. Einar Haralds in Vancouver; and Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Danielson in Blaine. The last mentioned furnished us "a home away from home," in a true sense. There we had our headquarters, and upon them fell the heaviest burden of our visit. But they did not consider it a burden, but discharged their duties as host and hostess with that genuine spirit of kindness and hospitality for which they are so well and so widely known.—V.J.E.

In the June issue of "Our Parish Messenger," the article captioned "Six Hundred Attend Opening of Camp," is erroneously attributed to Mr. S. O. Bjerring. This was written by the editor, and apologies are being tendered Mr. Bjerring and the readers of this paper.